



## WINCHESTER COLLEGE

### Testing for COVID-19 at Winchester College

In combination with school-wide mitigations, our asymptomatic screening programme using the SAMBA system to establish a school bubble proved very effective in maintaining continuity of education during the period September – December 2020. In addition, symptomatic testing using SAMBA allowed us to keep precautionary isolations to a minimum. We will of course be continuing with the SAMBA system and booking of test slots for next week's staggered return has gone very smoothly indeed.

As you may know the Department for Education, in conjunction with NHS Test & Trace, has now introduced a twice-weekly COVID-19 testing programme for schools. The process uses Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs) and is known as Lateral Flow Testing (LFT). This government programme is voluntary and as you will see in the consent form (the link is below), it is important that you have discussed the testing with your son and he is happy to participate. If on the day of testing, your son does not wish to take part, then he will not be made to do so and consent can be withdrawn at any time ahead of the test. The following are some points to note in your discussions with your son:

- The consent is for self-swabbing only. The self-swabbing process and LFDs are generally not as sensitive as the SAMBA system, where swabs are conducted by our trained nurses.
- As with all tests for COVID-19 (including SAMBA), a negative test result is only a snapshot in time and your son will still need to go about his daily routine at school as though he had not been tested. He must continue to maintain all the normal safety measures associated with the current government guidance and the school's COVID-19 risk assessment.
- Nominally, your son will have LFTs 3 – 5 days apart throughout the term, though he can opt out at any time. The first screening test will be a SAMBA test (before entry to the boarding house), followed by two LFTs conducted by trained operatives. Thereafter, your son will be provided with LFD "home" test kits to be self-administered under adult supervision. He will conduct these up to house. The two occasions with trained operatives will be excellent opportunities for your son to be trained in best practice.
- If your son tests positive on the LFD he must self-isolate and have a confirmatory NHS PCR test. The school will issue him with an NHS postal PCR kit; school nurses will take the swab and arrange for it to be posted. We shall ask you or your son's guardian to collect him for self-isolation whilst he awaits the result of the PCR test. Meanwhile, all of his identified close contacts from the previous 48 hours will need to self-isolate until we receive the outcome of the confirmatory PCR test. If the PCR test result is negative then your son and his close contacts can return to school. A positive PCR result will mean that your son and his close contacts will need to continue to self-isolate for the full 10 days. We have some limited accommodation in School for self-isolation of international pupils, though we would have to approach guardians to take some international pupils if numbers became too large.

If you would like your son to take part in the government programme then please do go to the link below to access the consent form and privacy notice. Once we have your consent to continue, we will schedule the tests for your son and inform his Housemaster and Matron. You may have questions relating to Lateral Flow Testing. Please direct your questions to [covidenquiries@Wincoll.ac.uk](mailto:covidenquiries@Wincoll.ac.uk) and we shall endeavour to answer as soon as possible.

[Consent form and Privacy Notice](#)